

What is claimed:

Sub A7

1. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:  
a substantially flat central portion for holding an object;  
a raised side surface positioned coaxially with said substantially flat central portion;  
a circular perforation formed coaxially with said substantially flat central portion and said raised side surface and positioned at a border between said substantially flat central portion and said raised side surface; and  
a plurality of axial perforations formed in said raised side surface extending along an entire width thereof from said circular perforation to an outer edge of said raised side surface;  
each adjacent pair of said plurality of axial perforations and a corresponding portion of said circular perforation defining a selectively removable tab, said selectively removable tab including text material thereon.
2. The plate of claim 1, wherein said text material is printed on an upper surface of said tab and comprises an open-ended opinion-evoking statement.
3. The plate of claim 1, wherein said text material is printed on both an upper and lower surface of said tab, said text material printed on said upper surface comprising a question, and said text material printed on said lower surface comprising a corresponding answer to said question.
4. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:  
a substantially flat central portion for holding an object;  
a raised side surface positioned coaxially with said substantially flat

central portion;

a plurality of removable tabs positioned substantially axially to said substantially flat central portion and raised side surface, said removable tabs including text material thereon.

5. The plate of claim 4, wherein said text material is printed on an upper surface of said tabs and comprises an open-ended opinion-evoking statement.

6. The plate of claim 4, wherein said text material is printed on both an upper and lower surface of said tabs, said text material printed on said upper surface comprising a question, and said text material printed on said lower surface comprising a corresponding answer to said question.

7. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:

a substantially flat central portion for holding an object;

a raised side surface positioned coaxially with said substantially flat central portion;

a circular perforation formed coaxially with said substantially flat central portion and said raised side surface and positioned within said raised side surface; and

a plurality of axial perforations formed in said raised side surface extending along an entire width thereof from said circular perforation to an outer edge of said raised side surface;

each adjacent pair of said plurality of axial perforations and a corresponding portion of said circular perforation defining a selectively removable tab, said selectively removable tab including text material thereon.

8. The plate of claim 7, wherein said text material is printed on an

upper surface of said tab and comprises an open-ended opinion-evoking statement.

9. The plate of claim 7, wherein said text material is printed on both an upper and lower surface of said tab, said text material printed on said upper surface comprising a question, and said text material printed on said lower surface comprising a corresponding answer to said question.

10. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:

an upper circular plate comprising a first rim;

a lower circular plate, comprising a second rim, fixed to said upper circular plate by a grommet at a center location thereof, said upper circular plate and said lower circular plate being aligned for relative circular movement therebetween, said first and second rims being positioned substantially concentrically;

said lower circular plate further comprising one or more text segments positioned on said second rim, said upper circular plate defining an opening which allows for the viewing of said second rim of said lower circular plate therethrough, said defined opening being covered by a transparent material fixed to said upper circular plate;

whereby, upon the rotation of said upper circular plate relative to said lower circular plate said defined opening is moved to a position to allow the display of one of said one or more text segments positioned on said second rim.

11. The plate of claim 10, wherein said text segments comprise open-ended opinion-evoking statements.

12. The plate of claim 10, wherein said first rim defines a second opening, whereby one of said one or more text segments may be displayed through each of said defined openings.

13. The plate of claim 12, wherein said text material displayed through said first of said openings comprises a question, and said text material displayed through said second of said openings comprises a corresponding answer to said question.

14. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:  
a substantially flat central portion for holding an object;  
a raised side surface positioned coaxially with said substantially flat central portion; and

one or more selectively removable perforated cutouts formed in said raised side surface, each of said selectively removable perforated cutouts including text material thereon.

15. The plate of claim 14, wherein said text material is printed on an upper surface of said selectively removable perforated cutout and comprises an open-ended opinion-evoking statement.

16. The plate of claim 14, wherein said text material is printed on both an upper and lower surface of said selectively removable perforated cutouts, said text material printed on said upper surface comprising a question, and said text material printed on said lower surface comprising a corresponding answer to said question.

17. The plate of claim 14, wherein said plate retains a consistent overall diameter even after removal of said selectively removable perforated cutouts.

18. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:  
a substantially flat central portion for holding an object;  
a raised side surface positioned coaxially with said substantially flat central portion; and

No  
Question  
Just  
Text

11/03/03 "ethers"

one or more selectively removable covered tabs formed on said raised side surface, each of said selectively removable covered tabs including text material thereunder.

19. The plate of claim 18, wherein said text material printed under said selectively removable covered tab comprises an open-ended opinion-evoking statement.

20. The plate of claim 18, wherein said text material printed under one of said selectively removable covered tabs comprises a question, and said text material printed under another of said selectively removable covered tabs comprises a corresponding answer to said question.

21. The plate of claim 18, wherein said selectively removable covered tabs comprise lightly coated adhesive strips that may be peeled off.

22. The plate of claim 18, wherein said selectively removable covered tabs may be scratched off utilizing standard well-known scratch-off techniques

23. A circular ring for attachment to a plate, comprising:  
a lower circular ring adapted to be fixed to said plate; and  
an upper circular ring rotatably fixed to said lower circular ring, said upper circular ring and said lower circular ring being aligned for relative circular movement therebetween, said upper and lower circular rings being positioned substantially concentrically;

said lower circular ring further comprising one or more text segments positioned thereon, said upper circular ring defining an opening which allows for the viewing of said lower circular ring therethrough;

whereby, upon the rotation of said upper circular ring relative to said lower circular ring said defined opening is moved to a position to allow the display of one of said one or more text segments positioned on said lower circular ring.

24. The circular ring of claim 23, wherein said text segments comprise open-ended opinion-evoking statements.

25. The circular ring of claim 23, wherein said upper circular ring defines a second opening, whereby one of said one or more text segments may be displayed through each of said defined openings.

26. The circular ring of claim 25, wherein said text material displayed through said first of said openings comprises a question, and said text material displayed through said second of said openings comprises a corresponding answer to said question.

27. The circular ring of claim 24, wherein said lower circular ring is fixed to said plate via a plurality of stoppers.

28. The circular ring of claim 24, wherein said lower circular ring is fixed to said plate via concentric circular rings.

29. The circular ring of claim 24, wherein said lower circular ring is fixed to said plate via a lip of said lower circular ring.

30. The circular ring of claim 29, wherein said upper circular ring is rotatably fixed to said lower circular ring via a lip of said upper circular ring.

31. The circular ring of claim 29, wherein said upper circular ring is rotatably fixed to said lower circular ring via a plurality of stoppers.

32. A circular ring for attachment to a plate, said plate comprising a

central flat portion and a circular rim, said rim further comprising a plurality of stoppers attached thereto and a plurality of text segments written thereon, said circular ring comprising:

one or more lips for engaging said plurality of stoppers to rotatably fix said circular ring to said plate, said circular ring and said plate being aligned for relative circular movement therebetween, said circular ring defining an opening which allows for the viewing of said rim of said plate therethrough;

whereby, upon the rotation of said circular ring relative to said plate said defined opening is moved to a position to allow the display of one of said one or more text segments positioned on said rim of said plate.

33. The circular ring of claim 32, wherein said text segments comprise open-ended opinion-evoking statements.

34. The circular ring of claim 32, wherein said circular ring defines a second opening, whereby one of said one or more text segments may be displayed through each of said defined openings.

35. The circular ring of claim 34, wherein said text material displayed through said first of said openings comprises a question, and said text material displayed through said second of said openings comprises a corresponding answer to said question.

36. A plate for generating conversations, comprising:

a substantially flat central portion for holding an object;

a raised side surface positioned coaxially with said substantially flat central portion;

a plurality of axial perforations formed in said raised side surface extending along a portion of a width of, and to an outer edge of, said raised side surface;

each adjacent pair of said plurality of axial perforations and a corresponding portion of said circular perforation defining a tab, said tab including text material thereon; and

an adhesive positioned on an underside of said tab;

whereby when said tab is folded under said raised side surface said tab is fixed to the underside of said raised side surface.

37. The plate of claim 36, wherein said text material is printed on an upper surface of said tab and comprises an open-ended opinion-evoking statement.

38. The plate of claim 36, wherein said text material is printed on both an upper and lower surface of said tab, said text material printed on said upper surface comprising a question, and said text material printed on said lower surface comprising a corresponding answer to said question.

39. The plate of claim 36, wherein additional text material is printed on said raised side surface adjacent said tab, said additional text material comprising a question, and said text material printed on said tab comprising a corresponding answer to said question.

40. A method of facilitating conversation between at least two conversation partners, the method comprising:

a) providing an open-ended question placed on a surface of a conversationware piece;

b) providing a revealing member operably coupled to the



conversationware piece, the revealing member being positioned generally over the open-ended question and selectively actuatable to reveal the open-ended question;

- c) actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question;
- d) reading aloud the open-ended question printed on the conversationware piece;
- e) answering aloud the open-ended question; and
- f) engaging at least one other of the conversation partners in open discussion.

41. The method of generating conversation according to Claim 40, further comprising:

providing a plurality of conversationware pieces, each of the plurality of conversationware pieces having a separate open-ended question placed thereon.

42. The method of generating conversation according to Claim 41, further comprising:

distributing one or more conversationware pieces to each conversation partner.

43. The method of generating conversation according to Claim 40, wherein the actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question comprises peeling the revealing member from at least part of the conversationware piece.

44. The method of generating conversation according to Claim 40 wherein the actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question comprises flipping the revealing member from a position generally flush with the conversationware

piece to a position generally inclined relative to the conversationware piece.

45. The method of generating conversation according to Claim 44 wherein the revealing member is a foldable handle.

46. The method of generating conversation according to Claim 40 wherein the actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question comprises scratching an opaque layer to reveal the open-ended question.

47. Conversation promoting apparatus comprising:

a conversationware piece;

a first phrase to which one or more conversation partners answer to promote conversation between the conversation partners, the first phrase being disposed on the conversationware piece; and a cover member coupled with the conversationware piece, the cover member at least obscuring the phrase on the conversationware piece when the cover member is in a first position, the cover member generally revealing the phrase when the cover member is in a second position.

48. The apparatus according to Claim 47 wherein the first phrase is an open-ended question.

49. The apparatus according to Claim 47 wherein the first phrase is a command.

50. The apparatus according to Claim 47 wherein the conversationware piece defines a top surface and a bottom surface, wherein the first phrase is printed on the bottom surface of the conversationware piece.

51. The apparatus according to Claim 47, further comprising a second conversationware piece having printed on one side a second phrase, wherein the

second phrase is different from the first phrase.

52. The apparatus according to Claim 47 wherein the cover member is a strip material with an adhesive disposed thereon, the strip material selectively removable from the conversationware piece to reveal the first phrase.

53. The apparatus according to Claim 47 wherein the cover member is a tab pivotally coupled to the conversationware piece, the tab being pivotable to a first position to reveal the first phrase.

54. The apparatus according to Claim 53 wherein the tab is a foldable handle.

55. The apparatus according to Claim 47 wherein the cover member is a scratchable opaque surface.

56. A method of promoting discussion between conversation partners, the method comprising:

providing a plurality of conversationware each having an open-ended question disposed on a surface thereof;

providing a revealing member operably coupled to each of the plurality of conversationware, the revealing member being positioned generally over each open-ended question and selectively actuatable to reveal the open-ended question;

distributing the plurality of conversationware to at least one of the conversation partners;

actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question;

reading aloud the open-ended question printed on the conversationware;

answering aloud the open-ended question; and

engaging all of the conversation partners in open discussion regarding the open-ended question.

57. The method of promoting discussion according to Claim 56 wherein the providing a plurality of conversationware each having an open-ended question disposed on a surface thereof includes printing each of the open-ended questions on an underside of the conversationware.

58. The method of promoting discussion according to Claim 56 wherein the actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question comprises peeling the revealing member from at least part of the conversationware.

59. The method of promoting discussion according to Claim 56 wherein the actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question comprises flipping the revealing member from a position generally flush with the conversationware to a position generally inclined relative to the conversationware.

60. The method of promoting discussion according to Claim 59 wherein the revealing member is a foldable handle.

61. The method of promoting discussion according to Claim 56 wherein the actuating the revealing member to reveal the open-ended question comprises scratching an opaque layer to reveal the open-ended question.

62. A method for generating a conversation, comprising the steps of:  
providing one or more open-ended opinion-generating statements; and  
attaching said one or more open-ended opinion-generating statements to a utilitarian object.